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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News
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This service distributes news and information to
Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees,
and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further
dissemination of this e-mail is encouraged.

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MN97178. BUMED Spearheads New TRICARE Outreach Program
Washington, DC - To get the information to where the
people are, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) is
starting a TRICARE Ombudsman program to help Navy and Marine
Corps members understand TRICARE.

The TRICARE Ombudsman program will be kicked off in
June at Jacksonville, FL; Bangor, WA; Camp Pendleton, CA;
Yuma, AZ; and Corpus Christi, TX.

"The program is being set up as a result of the
feedback we've gotten from Navy and Marine Corps people -
our customers," said CDR Pat Denzer, MSC, who's heading up
the program for BUMED. "They said they needed to get
TRICARE information in a convenient way. We're working to
make it as easy as possible for them."

Denzer said that the hospital commanding officer at
each site will work with the Line commanders on the base to
determine where health benefits advisors, who are experts on
TRICARE, should locate to be convenient to their customers.
For example, at some sites, the advisor may be located at

commissaries or exchanges several times a week.

BUMED will test out the ombudsman program for six months, and, depending on the results of customer surveys, may continue the program at its original test sites and expand it to other bases.

TRICARE is the Department of Defense's new health care plan that improves access and offers choices for care to beneficiaries.

By Jan Davis, BUMED

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MN97179. It's The Law, Thanks to Navy Officer

San Antonio, TX - If you've ever thought one person couldn't make a difference, ask Medical Service Corps officer LT Darwin G. Goodspeed.

Texas legislation recently passed a bill that Goodspeed proposed. Goodspeed, a resident at the U.S. Army-Baylor University Graduate Program, drafted the proposal for Texas legislation that would save taxpayers big bucks, and also adequately fund emergency medical service (EMS) and trauma initiatives that would save lives.

No one questions the importance of EMS, but with the U.S. spending more than \$176 million in federal and state funds last year providing EMS, it's no wonder Texas state legislature jumped at the chance to get the proposed bill passed.

Goodspeed's bill - State Senate Bill 102 - is a simple one: The legislation will create an emergency medical services and trauma care system fund to finance county and regional EMS systems. Money will be raised by assessing an EMS/trauma care system fund fee of \$2 on each new or renewed driver's and commercial driver's license and learner's permits.

Since approximately six million driver's licenses are renewed or issued each year in Texas, the fee would raise about \$12 million for the state's EMS/Trauma system. The funds will be used to enhance the development of training of personnel and purchase of better equipment.

"We've seen, from pilot studies, this can have a significant impact especially in rural areas," said Goodspeed.

So how was one person able to figure out a way to solve the dilemma of needing better services but not having the funding?

Goodspeed conducted a phone survey of all 50 states and asked seven questions about trauma funding. The result of his research revealed that states with the best and most consistent funding have developed a unique funding mechanism that is independent of state general funds and federal funding.

Goodspeed's bill will ensure funding is available for services, equipment and training for EMS/Trauma services. If you're in Texas and find yourself being rescued by the EMS/Trauma team, you can thank one Sailor who made a

difference.

By LT Edie Rosenthal, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
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MN97180. Quiet, Efficient and Pollution-Free: Jax's New Energy Producer

Jacksonville, FL - Naval Hospital (NH) Jacksonville is getting a big part of its electrical power and hot water nearly pollution-free, thanks to a new-fangled contraption that sits in its back yard.

NH Jacksonville has a fuel cell, a box car-size receptacle that produces electricity and heat by combining hydrogen and oxygen in an electro-chemical process. It operates without burning fuel and with minimal moving parts, minimizing exhaust and noise.

Jacksonville got their fuel cell as part of the Department of Defense's demonstration of this technology.

"Fuel cells have a very high national interest right now for several reasons," said Dr. Michael Binder of the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories, Champaign, IL, which is managing the demonstration program. "They can operate on natural gas, they're very efficient, essentially free of air emissions, and most important, available on the market now."

Jacksonville's cell produces a constant 200 kilowatts of electrical power and more than 500,000 BTUs of thermal energy, which decreases the hospital's use of traditionally generated electricity and steam.

According to the hospital's Staff Civil Engineer, LTJG Joe Simpkins, CEC, the cell will save the hospital more than \$70,000 this year.

"The fuel cell produces enough electricity and hot water to supply a small neighborhood," said Simpkins.

There are 34 fuel cells in operation nation-wide. A possible future for the fuel cell is powering a "stealth" ship that is quiet, efficient and pollution-free.

By Bob Hines, NH Jacksonville

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MN97181. San Diego Liaison Makes Fleet Connection

San Diego - Naval Medical Center San Diego's Naval Station branch clinic is taking good care of the ships that dock in their ports.

As part of an improved fleet liaison program, the clinic has introduced several initiatives under the new fleet liaison coordinator, HM2(SW) Sean Mahan.

Coming from shipboard duty aboard USS PORT ROYAL (CG 73), Mahan is aware of the concerns of ship's Medical Departments and addresses them by going directly to the customer - the Fleet.

The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery requires fleet liaison coordinators to visit ships monthly. Mahan does that, and more.

"I try to anticipate their needs as much as possible

instead of waiting for the phone to ring," said Mahan. "As fleet liaison, my goal is to offer effective and timely two-way communication between the operating (fleet) and the shore medical assets."

He calls visiting ships a month before arrival to provide them with information and contacts for services available in the area. He then meets the ship when it arrives.

Mahan is also responsible for the 61 ships homeported in San Diego. He visits them twice a month to assess their Medical Departments' needs. According to Mahan, his initial visits took as long as three hours to get feedback, but today it usually takes no more than 10 to 15 minutes.

A month before deployment, Mahan ensures the ship's Medical Departments have what they need and that they have points of contact for medical assistance at each of the ship's port calls.

Mahan doesn't only take care of U.S. Navy's ships. He takes care of foreign vessels as well, including ships from the navies of Canada, Italy and Japan.

By Kimberly Allen, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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MN97182. Corpsman Helps Save Injured Girl at Yosemite Lemoore, CA - It was a rescue even Rambo would have been proud of.

When a Search and Rescue Team (SAR) from Naval Air Station Lemoore got a call from Yosemite National Park officials asking for help in rescuing a fall victim, they were on their way and on site in 40 minutes.

Once there, they found a park SAR team treating a 13-year-old girl who had tumbled some 25 feet and suffered head and pelvic injuries. Because of where she'd fallen, the park's helicopter couldn't make the landing to medevac her.

Enter the Navy and HMC Mark Horrall, who was lowered down on a cable about 150 feet to a walkway, where he then edged down to the injured girl. He treated her and began working with the Navy SAR helicopter to pick up the girl and get her to a hospital.

According to helicopter co-pilot LT Marvin de la Vega, the location made the task tricky.

"It was pretty much an eight or nine on the challenge scale and the swirling winds didn't make it any easier," de la Vega said.

The helicopter was facing a cliff only 25 feet past the rotors and a waterfall on one side and more cliff walls and trees on another, all about 50 feet from the tips of the rotor. To make things worse, the waterfall was causing drafts in the area.

Once the litter containing the girl was hooked up to the helicopter, it had to back out from the cliff wall, the litter dangling. It wasn't until the helicopter was out of the tight spot that it could haul the litter up.

It was the second rescue the Navy team had assisted at

Yosemite in just over a week.

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MN97183. MSC Officer Named Outstanding Clinical Scientist

Guam - U.S. Naval Hospital Guam's LT Ronald V. Bajet, MSC, was selected as 1997 Armed Forces Outstanding Clinical Scientist.

The award is given by the Society for Armed Forces Military Laboratory Scientists (SAFMLS) for outstanding contributions and excellence in clinical laboratory operations and laboratory management.

Bajet was cited for his quick implementation of the Composite Healthcare System Computer (CHCS) at the hospital and preparing the hospital for its first ever accreditation by the College of American Pathologists (CAP). His work resulted in the laboratory receiving zero phase II discrepancies, the highest achievable result of this inspection.

Bajet also developed the hospital's first ever phlebotomy (blood) training program. The only program of its kind, it prepares individuals to take the American Society for Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) certification exam. As a result of this training, more than forty students successfully completed the ASCP exam.

By Vera Ando-Winstead, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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MN97184. Corpsman Wrestles His Way to the Top

Pensacola, FL - Matt Lamb can help treat what ails you, but if you're not careful, he can also put the hurt on you.

Lamb is a corpsman at Naval Hospital (NH) Pensacola, but he's also a member of the U.S. Navy's wrestling team and is ranked one of the top wrestlers in the nation.

The 6-foot-4 and 286-pound wrestler recently defeated Olympic silver medalist Greg Gibson for a silver medal in the heavyweight division of the U.S. Open Wrestling Championship in Orlando.

"It was a good tournament for me," said Lamb. "It put me back on track."

Lamb competed in the Armed Forces Championships recently, placing a "disappointing" third.

Lamb is competing in the Concord Cup International Tournament in California over the Memorial Day weekend and the World Team trials in Minneapolis, MN, on June 25 - his birthday.

By Rod Duren, NH Pensacola

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MN97185. BUMED Training to Be Re-Certified by Council

Washington, DC - Once every six years, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's technical training institutions that provide "A" and "C" school must undergo re-affirmation of re-accreditation by the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

The re-affirmation process provides an excellent measure of institutional effectiveness and provides a stimulus for educational improvement.

During the month of June, a COE team will be visiting BUMED's assistant chief for education, training and personnel and each of BUMED's ten branch "campuses" (commands) as part of the re-accreditation process.

For more information about the visit or the re-accreditation process, contact Melva Boatright, BUMED's program manager for accreditation at (202) 762-3830, DSN 762-3830 or e-mail nmc5mmb@bms200.med.navy.mil.

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MN97186. Fleet Hospital Operations and Training Invites You Home

Cyberspace - Fleet Hospital Operations and Training Command (FHOTC) now has its own homepage, and they're inviting you for a visit.

"Right now we have just two sections up and running, class schedules and point of contacts," said LCDR Dan Walker, MSC. "But other sections are under construction, and we're constantly updating."

The FHOTC is located at sddet-srv.medweb.navy.mil/~fhotc.

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MN97187. Revised BUMED Equipment Management Manual Available
Naval Medical Logistics Command (NMLC), the Medical Department's equipment manager, has released the newly revised Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's Equipment Management Manual (NAVMED P-5132) on CD-ROM.

The manual is also available on NMLC's homepage, www-nmlc.med.navy.mil.

The CDs were shipped the end of April. If your command did not receive it, contact Penny Hernandez, NMLC, at (301) 619-7247, e-mail phernandez@nml10.med.navy.mil.

There is a limit of one per command.

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MN97188. TRICARE Question and Answer

Q. I'm the spouse of an active duty Sailor. We don't live near a military treatment facility (MTF). Which TRICARE option is the best choice for me if I don't live close to a MTF?

A. If you are able to enroll in TRICARE Prime, this is probably the most cost-efficient option for you. The Department of Defense is working on setting up Prime in some areas where there's no MTF, but still quite a few military members. That means your care will come from a civilian provider who is participating in Prime.

If Prime is not available where you live, you can still save money by participating in TRICARE Extra. TRICARE Extra offers more flexibility than Prime when choosing health care professionals and is more widely available. It saves you

money by discounting TRICARE Standard's rates.

For help selecting a civilian health care provider who participates in TRICARE Extra, call or visit your nearest TRICARE Service Center.

If TRICARE Extra is not available in your area, use TRICARE Standard, which is available everywhere.

Additional information on TRICARE and your military health care benefit is on the Department of Defense Health Affairs homepage on the World Wide Web at www.ha.osd.mil.

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MN97189. Healthwatch: Water Can Turn Summer Dreams to Nightmares

Memorial Day weekend signals the start of swimming season in many parts of the country. Service members and their families will travel to ocean beaches, lakefronts and local swimming pools to escape the summer temperatures.

As the summer heat draws more people toward refreshing pools and beaches, swimmers must use their heads for more than diving into water. The American Red cross cautions water hazards could turn swimmers' summer dreams to nightmares.

"Lives can be saved this summer if people use caution in, on and around the water," said Susan Livingstone, vice president, Health and Safety Services, American Red Cross.

According to the National Safety Council's 1995 Accident Facts Report, drowning is the second leading cause of death from unintentional injuries for youth aged 5 to 24. It's also the fourth leading cause of death from unintentional injuries for all ages.

Livingstone said drowning can occur in home pools, community pools, oceans, lakes, waterparks, bathtubs, or even large buckets.

"People need to know the dangers involved and know how to take action in an emergency, because when an emergency situation arises, help can't wait," Livingstone added.

Besides knowing swimming limits, swimmers must never swim alone, especially on beaches and lakes. "There are areas that may have drastic drop-offs and undertows," she said. "Some of these areas don't have lifeguards, and many have no warning sign of the dangers."

Red Cross officials encourage swimmers to know the basics of first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Livingstone said American Red Cross chapters routinely conduct training sessions for swimmers and lifeguards.

Other hints for a safe swimming season include:

- Never swim after drinking alcohol or using medications.

- Always check the water depth. Walk in from the shore or ease in from the dock or edge of a pool.

- Don't swim if you can't see the bottom of the pool in the deep end or if the water is cloudy.

- Watch out for the "dangerous toos" - too tired, too cold, too far from, too much sun, and too much exercise.

- Always keep an eye on young swimmers.
- Obey all lifeguard instructions and respect their judgment.
- Never fake an emergency.
- Learn the proper way to dive into water.
- Never rely on floating toys, air mattresses or arm bands to prevent drowning.
- Always keep a life jacket near the beach, boat or pool.
- Ensure all swimmers understand pool and beach rules.
- Do not run or push near pools.
- Never swim when you are ill.
- Don't swim during thunderstorms.

By Master Sgt. Stephen Barrett, American Forces Press Service

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil, telephone 202/762-3223 (DSN 762-3223), or fax 202/762-3224.